

Amendments to the Specification

Please amend page 1 of the specification to add the following new paragraph immediately after the Title:

-- The present case is based on International Application No. PCT/EP2003/014890 filed on December 23, 2003, which claims priority of U.S. Provisional application No. 60/437,474 filed on January 2, 2003. --

Please amend the third paragraph of page 6 of the application as follows:

The esterification of fatty acids with alkanolamines is carried out at a temperature of from about 150° - 250°C until the reaction product has an acid value of below 5. After the esterification, the crude product is reacted with alkylating agents in order to obtain the quaternary ammonium product. The alkylating agent employed in the present invention is dimethyl sulfate having a ~~dulfur~~ sulfur dioxide content of less than about 20 ppm, in another embodiment less than 10 ppm, in another embodiment less than 8 ppm, and in yet another embodiment less than 5 ppm. Typically, 0.7 to 1.0, preferably 0.75 to 0.98 mol dimethyl sulfate per mole of esteramine is satisfactory in yielding the quaternized product.